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**About Diversity & Democracy**

Diversity & Democracy supports higher education faculty and leaders as they design and implement programs that advance civic learning and democratic engagement, global learning, and engagement with diversity to prepare students for socially responsible action in today’s interdependent but unequal world. The publication features evidence, research, and exemplary practices to assist practitioners in creating learning opportunities that realize this vision.
Advancing Equity on Campuses and in Communities

If you are near a computer and have Internet access, take a moment to visit the Opportunity Index (www.opportunityindex.org) and note the array of shades, from vibrant to pallid, mapping relative levels of opportunity in locales across the nation. The index points to the interlocking nature of educational, economic, and community factors in determining who has the best chance to succeed. It also underscores that equal access to opportunity remains an unrealized dream in many municipalities across the United States.

Fittingly, postsecondary educational attainment is one factor the index uses to measure opportunity. As the Association of American Colleges and Universities has long argued, higher education in general and liberal education in particular can and should provide pathways to opportunity, broadly defined. Higher education also should build the skills, knowledge, and social and intellectual capital that students and society need to create thriving communities. But disparities in access to and success within higher education can codify rather than combat inequality, particularly for underserved students and their communities.

For example, access to higher education varies deeply by socioeconomic status, with only 33.5 percent of recent high school graduates in the lowest income quintile enrolled in college in 2011, compared with 82.4 percent in the highest quintile (National Center for Education Statistics 2012). Degree attainment differs by factors like race and ethnicity, with African American, American Indian, and Hispanic students less likely than their peers to earn a baccalaureate degree within six years (Hughes 2013, 30). And in the classroom, students’ educational experiences vary widely, with students from certain historically underserved groups less likely to participate in some high-impact educational practices (Kuh 2008, 16–17).

In the face of these disparities, it is critical for colleges and universities to take a close look at their own roles in advancing equity on campuses and in communities. Where do disparities in access and success—including disparities in access to a high-quality liberal education—manifest on campus and in the classroom? Which students not only enter and complete higher education, but also benefit from the best educational practices our institutions can offer? How can higher education ensure that all students, regardless of background or personal characteristics, have access to what AAC&U’s recent strategic plan, with its focus on inclusive excellence, calls “a liberal and liberating education that engages all college students with big questions and real-world challenges, in both US and global contexts, and develops the capacities and the commitment to solve problems across difference” (2013, 1)?

With these questions in mind, this issue of Diversity & Democracy examines higher education’s role in advancing equity, both on campuses and in communities. The issue features examples of institutional leadership and campus models for diversity and equity that simultaneously advance underserved students’ educational access and success and promote the flourishing of institutions, communities, democracy, and global society at large. Contributing authors address old barriers based in discrimination and new opportunities related to demographic change, sharing practices and programs that pursue established ideals about national identity and new aspirations for global engagement. They offer perspective on recent legal challenges to higher education’s efforts to create diverse student bodies—particularly the Supreme Court’s decision in Fisher v. the University of Texas at Austin, pending as this issue goes to press. They highlight educational models that explicitly contribute to community advancement, and they call on readers to consider student success as an investment in thriving communities.

These efforts to advance equity have high stakes, not only for America’s students, but also for our society and the various local, regional, national, and global communities that constitute it. With focused and intentional efforts, higher education can play its part in deepening the hues of the Opportunity Index across the nation, building a map as vibrant as the communities it represents.

—KATHRYN PELTIER CAMPBELL, editor of Diversity & Democracy

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FROM THE EDITOR

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Higher Education and Equity: Historical Narratives, Contemporary Debates

RAMÓN A. GUTIÉRREZ, Preston and Sterling Morton Distinguished Service Professor of American History at the University of Chicago

Many narratives of American history exist, but two have been particularly divisive over the last fifty years, setting popular understandings of race and ethnicity in opposition to each other and provoking resentment between majority and minority groups. The first of these narratives tells of a United States riven by racism since the colonial period, with racial minorities’ claims to citizenship slowly gaining government protection over the course of the nation’s history. The second, while recognizing racism’s toxic legacies, focuses instead on ethnicity, pronouncing the United States a nation of nations: “E Pluribus Unum,” or “Out of Many One.”

The friction between these narratives lies at the heart of a debate that has raged in our polity since the 1950s. The debate focuses on the question of whether addressing racial injustices should take precedence over alleviating grievances based on ethnicity and nationality. In this essay, I map the contours of this debate from the birth of the Civil Rights movement to the widely proclaimed post-racial moment in which we putatively live today. In doing so, I aim to provide historical context for higher education’s contested work to advance racial and other forms of equity and support our nation’s democratic ideals.

Individual and Institutional Racism

Americans marched into battle during World War II to end fascism and establish democratic rule. Though all soldiers put their lives in harm’s way, their rewards on returning home were apportioned by race. White veterans received government benefits, subsidized home loans, college tuition waivers, and well-paid jobs. African American and Mexican American veterans did not fare as well, returning to discriminatory practices prohibiting “colored” war heroes from being buried in white cemeteries and forcing even uniformed soldiers to use segregated facilities.

In 1944, Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal took stock of these conditions in his Carnegie Corporation-funded report, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy. In Myrdal’s estimation, the “American dilemma” was whether citizens would choose their vaunted ideals of equality or yield to irrational prejudices. Like anthropologist Franz Boas before him, Myrdal described discrimination as rooted in social and cultural, not biological, distinctions—based largely on the superficial fact of skin color rather than on innate differences. He noted, “The American Negro problem is a problem in the heart of the American...White prejudice and discrimination keep the Negro low in standards of living, health, education, manners and morals” (1962, lxxi).

By the early 1960s, African Americans had organized a civil rights movement in response to these conditions. While some labor unionists advocated for radical economic transformation, they were quickly branded Communists and suppressed (Korstad and Lichtenstein 1988). More moderate reformers anchored in churches and middle-class organizations sought white liberal allies among government, business, educational, and religious elites. Led by the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., these reformers were instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968, as well as affirmative action programs that aimed to eradicate the country’s history of racial subordination.

Just as the federal government began advancing these reforms in the late 1960s, race riots broke out in several American cities. President Lyndon B. Johnson appointed a National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, chaired by Illinois Governor Otto Kenner, to explore the causes of the uprisings. Issued in February 1968, the Kenner Report boldly stated: “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black and one white—separate and unequal... Discrimination and segregation have long permeated much of American life; they now threaten the future of every American.” The report explained that the race riots were rooted in segregation, inadequate housing, poor access to quality education, systematic police violence, and labor market exclusion. For these factors, the report concluded, “White racism is essentially responsible” (1–2).

The Kenner Report signaled a shift in American politics from an understanding of racism as based in individual acts of personal animus to a focus on institutional racism rooted in society’s social and economic arrangements. Stokley Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton’s 1967 book Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America was catalytic in this shift. Offering a framework for black political, economic, and psychological empowerment, Carmichael and Hamilton differentiated between individual and institutional racism, locating the foundation of the latter in a host of detrimental government policies meant to enforce racial subordination. If American blacks were to forge their own freedom, they would need to establish...
community sovereignty and self-determination as part of a global Black Power movement (Gutiérrez 2004).

Although Martin Luther King, Jr. was becoming more radical about issues of economic justice, he found the language of Black Power profoundly unsettling. King preferred “Black equality” or “Black consciousness,” correctly predicting that the rhetoric of Black Power would unleash a torrent of white prejudice that up to that point had not been expressed openly (King 1968, 31).

**Immigration and American Ethnicity**

Since the end of World War II, both the Republican and Democratic parties had chronicling the distinct contribution immigrants had made to America. Published posthumously in 1964, these writings reflected a shift in social science since World War II from understanding race as biological to emphasizing that people from distinct places were united by cultural practices and associational patterns—which, unlike bloodlines and physical appearance, could change. “Ethnicity” emerged as the word to describe this phenomenon.

Harvard sociology professors Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan helped lead this epistemic shift. Harking back to the idea of “cultural pluralism” first elaborated by philosopher Horace Kallen in 1915, Glazer and Moynihan explained in their book Beyond the Melting Pot that many differences evident among groups were ethnic, not racial; rooted in culture, not structure. According to Glazer and Moynihan, the home, family, and community—not institutional racism—were responsible for any failure to succeed in American education and society. As President Johnson’s assistant secretary of labor for policy planning and research, Moynihan went on to author his infamous 1965 study The Negro Family, in which he decried the dysfunction of the black family, “its present tangle of pathology,” as beyond repair (US Department of Labor 1965, 93).

Slowly the critiques of institutional racism produced by the Black Power movement (and later by the Chicano, Red, and Yellow Power movements) were displaced by an understanding of inequalities as based in ethnicity and culture. While the Black Power movement’s notions of racial pride and self-assertion had a powerful impact on minority groups, they simultaneously helped spark a white immigrant ethnic revival. In 1970, for example, the New Jersey based Ukrainian Weekly reported: “The notion of ‘Ukrainian Power’—a borrowing to be sure, from America’s black community—is passing in Ukrainian circles from a mere phrase to a workable and quite feasible concept” (Jacobson 2006, 20).

By recuperating their immigrant roots and positioning themselves as ethnic minorities, white Americans were able to distance themselves from the benefits of white privilege and the legacies of colonial conquest, genocide, and slavery. In time, the white ethnic immigrant revival yielded the language of reverse discrimination, and with it, the push for a color-blind society.

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Although Martin Luther King, Jr. was becoming more radical about issues of economic justice, he found the language of Black Power profoundly unsettling. In July 1963, 54 percent of whites across the nation opined that President Kennedy was “pushing racial integration too fast” (Erskine 1968, 514).

In fact, the Kennedy administration was unable to advance any significant civil rights legislation, and Kennedy’s writings helped launch a second narrative of American history that downplayed the role of race. In 1958, as a US Senator, Kennedy had penned A Nation of Immigrants, a pamphlet that called for immigration reform by

At least nominally endorsed the idea of racial equality. But in 1962, when John F. Kennedy’s administration assigned federal troops to integrate schools and force James Meredith’s admission to the University of Mississippi, southern whites’ opposition to integration intensified. In July 1963, 54 percent of whites across the nation opined that President Kennedy was “pushing racial integration too fast” (Erskine 1968, 514).

Pressing Legacies and Present Challenges

These competing narratives of American history have formed the backdrop for higher education’s contested work to advance racial equity. During the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, colleges and universities recruited racial minorities and created black, Chicano, Native American, and Asian American centers, programs, and departments. After the 1965 Immigration Act abolished national quotas, more immigrants from historically excluded regions—including Asia, Africa, and Latin America—also enrolled in higher education, thus transforming the culture of institutions.

In the 1980s and 1990s, many colleges and universities embraced broader notions of diversity and critical multiculturalism focused not only on numeric representation, but also on curricular
transformation and the creation of campus climates that were conducive to a diverse student body, faculty, and staff. But these progressive changes have been accompanied by significant legal challenges, beginning with the Supreme Court’s 1978 ruling on Allan Bakke’s admission to the medical school at the University of California–Davis. In its decision, the court upheld the use of race in admissions in principle but concluded that the medical school’s practice of reserving sixteen of its one hundred admission slots for black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American applicants was tantamount to a quota system that discriminated against whites. Questions about affirmative action in higher education persist in Abigail Fisher’s case, now before the Supreme Court. Fisher applied to the University of Texas at Austin in 2008, but was not among the top tier of graduating high school seniors automatically guaranteed admission. When Fisher failed to gain admission based on a secondary review of her talents and familial circumstances (such as race or immigrant status), she filed suit on the basis of racial discrimination. Whether the Supreme Court’s forthcoming decision will allow colleges and universities to craft admissions criteria where race is one of many factors considered necessary to create diverse learning environments remains to be seen.

The court’s decision may have significant impacts at a time when the fissures in America’s racial and ethnic tapestry not only persist, but are deeply riven by inequalities based in socioeconomic class and immigrant status. Today, the top 0.1 percent of the American population—that is, sixteen thousand families—controls 5 percent of the country’s total wealth, while the bottom 40 percent controls only 0.3 percent (The Economist 2012, 13). While a high-end workforce populated by educated and skilled workers earns handsome wages, a low-end labor market occupied largely by poorly paid immigrants is scapegoated for the country’s economic woes and increasingly subjected to xenophobic behaviors and draconian laws.

Today, much as when Myrdal wrote An American Dilemma in 1944, America’s moral dilemma is arguably whether its citizens will choose their democratic ideals of equality or will succumb to irrational prejudices.

The defunding of public education has intensified the challenge of responding to these realities. Many public institutions are abandoning their commitment to their citizens, increasing tuition and enrolling higher proportions of foreign and out-of-state students to meet their budgetary shortfalls. These changes virtually guarantee that the talented poor—including many racial minorities and recent immigrants—will be denied access to higher education and the opportunities it presents.

Today, much as when Myrdal wrote An American Dilemma in 1944, America’s moral dilemma is arguably whether its citizens will choose their democratic ideals of equality or will succumb to irrational prejudices.
[ADVANCING EQUITY]

Diversity and Systemic Change: Promoting Gateway Success through Collaboration

H. Jordan Landry, professor of English at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh (UW Oshkosh) has long served a diverse group of first-generation college students, including students from rural and urban areas, white students and students of color, and students from a broad range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The campus has made diversity, equity, and inclusion central to its vision. Yet UW Oshkosh also recognizes disparities between its ideal of inclusion and the real experiences of underrepresented students, particularly students of color.

Since 2010, UW Oshkosh has tackled these disparities in a systematic way. The result has been an inspired and energized movement dedicated to transforming the experiences and increasing the academic success of students of color and students from other underserved groups. The movement has advanced a broad understanding that diversity benefits the entire university community, and that work done to advance the inclusion of students of color thus benefits the university as a whole.

Sparking a Movement through Dialogue

In spring 2010, at the invitation of the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor, the College of Letters and Science dean’s office began participating in the Association of American Colleges and Universities’ Give Students a Compass project, part of the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative. The national project aimed to help participating institutions build an infrastructure to support student success, particularly among traditionally underserved students. The dean’s office focused participation on creating a concerted movement among faculty and instructional academic staff to transform gateway courses in ways that would address growing disparities between the success rates of students of color and those of white students.

After an initial meeting of volunteers was dominated by a single voice blaming students of color for their lower success rates, the dean’s office developed an intentional approach to shaping the movement. The office decided to frame perspective-taking and equity-mindedness as key components of all dialogues; invite diverse members of the college community to the table along with experts on diversity and inclusion; engage college leaders who were flexible, creative, and action oriented; and create a structure with no resemblance to a typical college committee.

Following these principles, the dean’s office organized dialogues during summer 2010 that brought together three overlapping groups: academic leaders with a record of supporting diversity on campus, newer faculty and academic staff members with reputations for encouraging positive dialogue around diversity, and leaders of departments and programs within the college. The dialogues focused on four topics: (1) challenges posed by the gateway courses themselves, (2) challenges faced by students of color both in courses and on campus, (3) contributions that students of color make to the classroom and the campus, and (4) proposed strategies for increasing the success of students of color in gateway courses.

Exploring Disaggregated Data

The dialogues were driven by the Oshkosh Student Achievement Report. Created by the assistant vice chancellor of curricular affairs and student academic achievement in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, the report compiles a wide range of data disaggregated by race and ethnicity, including GPAs, retention and graduation rates, and DFW rates (measuring the percentage of students that withdraw from a class or finish with grades of D or F). The 2009–10 report revealed a steadily widening gap between gateway course success rates for students of color and those of their white peers. It also told a devastating story of the many challenges confronting students of color from the moment they set foot on campus. Roughly one-third finish their first semester with a GPA below 2.0, a measure that predicts a high likelihood of leaving the university. Thus one in three students of color at UW Oshkosh feels intense pressure to leave college after only one semester.

By encouraging college leaders to view the data through an equity lens, the dean’s office fostered a strong ethos for what is now called the Gateway Success initiative. Stressing that change would not happen through mandate, the dean’s office asked instructors and departments to take responsibility for the success of students of color by developing their own strategies for improving these students’ success rates. Over the course of five summer meetings, participants addressed their underlying assumptions about students who perform poorly, increased their understanding of how challenges in the gateway courses relate to students’ persistence at the university, and identified pedagogical and curricular transformations that would increase student success. The result has been movement toward a campus culture that values students of color as...
crucial contributors to courses and to the campus community.

**Advancing Change through Leadership**

After almost three years, the Gateway Success initiative is thriving. The leaders who participated in the summer dialogues have inspired others to take leadership in the movement. The resulting proliferation of diffuse, dynamic, and diverse leadership has ensured that rich and varied strategies to transform the gateway courses continue to develop. Five strategies have been particularly popular: (1) strengthening students’ ties to the instructor and to each other; (2) connecting students to crucial academic services; (3) teaching students the fundamental academic skills central to the disciplines; (4) infusing content about diverse peoples into the curriculum; and (5) promoting active and collaborative learning in the classroom.

Several departments have responded to the summer meetings by hosting collaborative dialogues where faculty review disaggregated data for their department’s gateway courses and propose solutions to disparities reflected therein. For example, the history department held a retreat in fall 2010 where instructors agreed to work toward implementing five goals in all gateway courses: (1) to place course texts on library reserve for those who cannot afford them; (2) to reach out to students who receive a D or lower on an assignment; (3) to take attendance regularly as a way of encouraging persistence; (4) to employ small group work and intentionally shape the make-up of groups to achieve inclusiveness; and (5) to collaborate with the Center for Academic Resources to connect struggling students with tutors. Through these strategies, the history department effected change in three gateway courses, where they lowered DFW rates for American Indian, Southeast Asian, and white students during the 2010–11 academic year.

Both the English and communication departments organized workshops where experts on diversity taught gateway course instructors about inclusive pedagogy and curriculum infusion of diverse content. These efforts were key to the initiative’s overall success, as almost all first-year students take both a Writing-Based Inquiry Seminar (WBIS) from the English department and a Fundamentals of Speech (COMM 111) course from the communication department. These courses teach skills that are crucial to students’ continuation at the university. Both departments focused on decreasing students’ sense of isolation and increasing their sense of belonging. Participating instructors committed to a range of individual action steps aimed at increasing academic success for students of color, including infusing more diverse content to engage a wider range of students, requiring reflective assignments to increase understanding of students’ struggles, and making knowledge of diversity a learning outcome for their courses. As a result of these strategies, DFW rates fell dramatically in both courses. In WBIS, DFW rates reached their lowest point since 2007 for students of every race and ethnicity. In COMM III, DFW rates fell for African American, American Indian, Southeast Asian, and Asian students, although they rose for white students and Hispanic students. Through a mini-grant from the college, the communication department is continuing to address these inequities and working to lower the DFW rate for all students.

Thus in 2010–11, departments that took leadership in the Gateway Success initiative increased the academic success of most students within their gateway courses, while departments that had no organized response saw disparities between students of color and their white majority peers widen or remain the same. Overall, the transformations made to increase the inclusion of students of color and other underserved students have benefited not only targeted students, but the university community as a whole.

**Expanding the Initiative’s Scope**

Recent developments promise to advance the Gateway Success initiative’s efforts. Because students’ academic success increases significantly when instructors work collaboratively, the second phase of the initiative supports teams working together to implement pedagogical innovation. Five department teams across the college have received mini-grants in amounts ranging from $3,000 to $5,000 to help them incorporate inclusive teaching practices into their first-year courses.

The dean’s office also created the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) task force to develop an approach to the gateway courses specific to STEM instructors, who were less likely than their peers in the humanities and social sciences to participate in the initiative. In spring 2012, task force leaders formed a learning community dedicated to investigating best practices in STEM teaching. Through collaboration with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), the STEM Task Force has organized a STEM Best Practices Certificate, to be awarded to instructors who participate in a series of five workshops focused on practices that create inclusive classrooms. Participants will receive a $500 stipend after completing the five workshops and incorporating a range of best practices into their courses.

Innovative collaborations have also occurred between leaders of English 100 (remedial English), the WBIS program, and the new University Studies Program (USP), the university’s re-envisioned general education program. Historically, a large number of students of color have
enrolled in English 100, and their success or failure in it often predicts whether they will stay at the university. As an initial response to Gateway Success, the Writing Center director (who was also teaching English 100) hired writing fellows who met weekly with students to model basic academic behaviors and provide early assistance in mastering the fundamentals of writing. In fall 2013, English 100 will modify this approach by piloting a model where writing fellows provide support for students’ work in a set of paired USP courses (WBIS and another general education course). Thus English 100 students will learn writing by working on assignments from other courses, fostering their appreciation for writing across the curriculum and underscoring the relevance of writing to their success.

Another collaborative project brought together faculty and instructional academic staff, diverse student leaders, and senior Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) scholars. Together the director of CETL and the dean’s office developed a workshop focused on incorporating inclusive pedagogy and infusing diverse content into first-year courses. The eleven instructors who participated in the workshop received $500 stipends. Five SoTL scholars also participated in the workshop as the first step in a project funded by the UW System to track and evaluate changes to the gateway courses through student surveys and interviews about reflective teaching practices.

Through the workshop and subsequent research, these SoTL scholars discovered that stories told during the workshop by student leaders from the LGBTQ community and multicultural organizations on campus were important motivators for instructors. The student leaders told of the strengths of their communities, the unforeseen challenges that they experienced on campus due to their identities, the specific barriers they faced in the gateway courses, and the strategies they used to succeed. They suggested ways in which the gateway courses could become more inclusive of students like themselves. The researchers shared their findings in public presentations and in organized meetings with instructors and administrators. As a result, the Gateway Success initiative continues to feature student leaders in faculty development workshops.

The SoTL research surfaced important findings about effective pedagogies. At the time of the study, two participating faculty members (one from the psychology department and one from the history department) were both working to encourage active learning by incorporating small group work into large lecture-based courses. In a sixty-seat history course, the instructor implemented ongoing learning communities, leading to an increase in student attendance and a decrease in student isolation as measured by student surveys. In a 230-seat psychology course, the instructor began using guided questions for small group work, leading to significant increases in students’ academic success and to decreased DFW rates for students of color and first-generation college students.

**Building an Equitable Future**

Collaborations across the college and university continue to shape the Gateway Success movement. The history and psychology instructors who led the changes described above now regularly present to new hires across the college, encouraging best practices for student learning in the classroom. Diverse student leaders also present regularly at workshops and meetings on Gateway Success, inspiring instructors and motivating change. Both remedial English and STEM courses are undergoing transformation.

By combining motivating data, compelling student stories, and collaborative dialogues, UW Oshkosh, instructors, students, and administrators continue to work toward a just and equitable future where diversity is broadly valued. For as Patricia Williams writes, “What happens to one may be the repercussive history that repeats itself in the futures of us all” (546).

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Equitable Designs for Global Learning

KEVIN HOVLAND, senior director of global learning and curricular change at the Association of American Colleges and Universities

What kinds of learning experiences should count as global learning, and how can institutions of higher education increase the number of students who participate in these experiences? Campus conversations on this topic too often start and end with efforts to increase student participation in study abroad. There are three shortcomings to this strategy. First, only study abroad experiences that are intentionally designed with carefully articulated outcomes are likely to meet broad campus goals for global learning. Second, very few students—only 14 percent of American bachelor’s degree recipients, and only 1 percent of US students within a given academic year—participate in study abroad (Institute of International Education 2012). Third, study abroad has historically represented a significant challenge to equal opportunity, and is relatively inaccessible for students who work, have family caretaking responsibilities, or are facing financial hardship. While many institutions have initiated programs to increase the participation of underrepresented students in study abroad, much work remains. For example, community college students—more than 40 percent of whom are first-generation college students (American Association of Community Colleges 2012)—make up only 3 percent of the already small share of students who study abroad (Institute of International Education 2012).

These numbers suggest that higher education should invest in more robust and holistic approaches to global learning—approaches that are, by design, available to all students. For more than a decade, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has worked with colleges and universities through its Shared Futures initiative to develop effective and inclusive curricular designs for global learning. AAC&U has organized these efforts around the assumption that large, complex, global challenges can bring coherence to the undergraduate curriculum by serving as thematic platforms upon which students can build a deep and broad liberal education. By encouraging campus partners to emphasize issues of diversity, identity, citizenship, and responsible action when designing these platforms, Shared Futures aims to move questions of equity, equality, and justice toward the center of student learning while also making such learning available to all students.

Defining Global Learning
AAC&U designed the Shared Futures initiative as a curriculum and faculty development laboratory where participating campus teams could experiment with curricular designs that require students to move across disciplinary boundaries and faculty to collaborate in interdisciplinary “trading zones.” In this laboratory, global learning is more than a single course or experience: it is a viable alternative to disconnected general education and distribution requirements. The curriculum, not the course, is the unit of focus, and the most important measure of success is students’ ability to integrate and apply their knowledge, skills, and sense of personal and social responsibility across general education, minors, and majors.

AAC&U has long argued that a well-conceived liberal education needs to help students make sense of the interdependence and interconnection of the world. While this case and its connections to global learning seem to have gained acceptance, global learning itself has become more difficult to define. Global learning has been described elsewhere (see, for example, the November–December 2011 issue of About Campus, to which AAC&U president Carol Geary Schneider and I contributed an article). But in its basic form, it generally includes the following elements:

- An effort on the part of faculty, administrators, and staff to translate lofty goals for student outcomes into concrete learning experiences;
- Experiences that span curricular and cocurricular locations in interesting and creative ways;
- Linked educational experiences with clearly articulated shared learning goals, resulting in well-marked pathways that enable students to integrate their knowledge, skills, commitments, and actions;
- Thematic organization of general education using complex global questions (climate change, migration, human rights, epidemics, poverty, etc.);
- The expectation that students will be able to make connections between general education and their majors, perhaps by exploring the role of disciplines in addressing global problems, challenges, and opportunities;
- The expectation that students will demonstrate what they have learned and what they are capable of doing through authentic assignments and meaningful engagement with real-world situations.

AAC&U encourages institutions to build on these basics, but each institution—participating in Shared Futures or not—must craft its own definition of global learning. This is a challenging but crucially important process to set the stage for successful curricular reform.

Global Learning on Campus
Colleges and universities participating
in the Shared Futures project General Education for a Global Century have made great progress in developing the theory and practice of global learning. At Michigan State University (MSU), for example, Shared Futures participants have connected their work to the institution’s liberal learning goals—analytical thinking, cultural understanding, effective citizenship, effective communication, and integrated reasoning—some of which are defined in ways that resonate with questions of equity and global learning:

- **Cultural Understanding**: “The MSU graduate comprehends global and cultural diversity within historical, artistic, and societal contexts.”

- **Effective Citizenship**: “The MSU graduate participates as a member of local, national, and global communities and has the capacity to lead in an increasingly interdependent world.”

- **Integrated Reasoning**: “The MSU graduate integrates discipline-based knowledge to make informed decisions that reflect humane social, ethical, and aesthetic values.” (Michigan State University Office of the Provost 2010)

Advocates of global learning at MSU have identified a parallel set of global competencies and placed them in dialogue with these widely-supported goals. In an important sense, the global competencies describe why the liberal learning goals are important—notably, for reasons clearly linked to questions of equity and equality.

So, for example, MSU’s framework for global learning asks graduates to demonstrate their cultural understanding for the purposes of (among other things) “question[ing] explicit and implicit forms of power, privilege, inequality, and equity.” They will demonstrate effective communication for the purposes of “us[ing] observation, conflict management, dialogue, and active listening as means of understanding and engaging with different people and perspectives.” And they will demonstrate effective citizenship for the purposes of “develop[ing] a personal sense of ethics, service, and civic responsibility that informs their decision-making about social and global issues”; “understand[ing] the connection between their personal behavior and its impact on global systems”; and “us[ing] their knowledge, attitudes, and skills to engage with issues that address challenges facing humanity locally and globally” (Michigan State University Office of the Provost 2010). MSU is infusing these global competencies into several courses across the curriculum (described on page 12).

### A Global Learning Rubric

Efforts at MSU and elsewhere to define global learning in its most ambitious and capacious sense have motivated AAC&U staff and a group of Shared Futures participants to develop and test a Global Learning Rubric. The rubric design committee hopes that this instrument will help campuses not only measure students’ global learning, but also more clearly articulate how global learning connects to significant national conversations about student learning outcomes, assessments, and portfolios. Now completed, the Global Learning Rubric has become part of AAC&U’s ongoing Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) project, which provides rubrics that reflect broadly shared criteria for assessing AAC&U’s Essential Learning Outcomes (http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm).

The rubric design committee agreed on the following definition of global learning, which aligns with Shared Futures goals and attends to questions of equity:

Global learning is a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, political) and their implications for people’s lives and the earth’s sustainability. Through global learning, students should 1) become informed, open-minded, and responsible people who are attentive to diversity across the spectrum of difference, 2) seek to understand how their actions impact both local and global communities, and 3) address the world’s most pressing and enduring issues collaboratively and equitably. (Association of American Colleges and Universities 2013)

Like all VALUE rubrics, the Global Learning Rubric describes expectations for demonstrated learning in multiple dimensions at four levels of performance—Benchmark, Milestone 1, Milestone 2, and Capstone. The rubric’s dimensions currently include global self-awareness, perspective taking, understanding cultural diversity, personal and social responsibility, understanding global systems, and applying knowledge to contemporary global contexts. (Editor’s note: A more complete description of the rubric and its development process will appear in the Summer 2013 issue of Diversity & Democracy.)

Not every global learning experience will address every dimension of the Global Learning Rubric. However, the rubric should prompt colleges and universities to use a fuller range of the curriculum and cocurriculum to ensure that students make progress in gaining the knowledge, skills, and practice they need to solve problems in collaboration with diverse communities. In fact, faculty and administrators can use the rubric to map a wide variety of educational experiences against goals for student learning outcomes and to identify potential cross-curricular collaborations and connections. Through this process, global learning can become an unavoidable part of the undergraduate experience that
reaches all students, not just the small percentage of students who study abroad.

**Global Learning in Local Contexts**
The approach to global learning outlined here challenges a persistent and dangerous misconception—that global learning is primarily characterized by its location. Too often “global learning” refers implicitly to education that occurs elsewhere, rather than to issues, challenges, and problems that influence and implicate everyone (albeit differently depending on position).

In fact, colleges and universities can design global learning opportunities to help all students more fully understand the effect of interconnected global systems and events on their own lives, even as they develop the capacity to understand the perspectives and experiences of others. Through Shared Futures, colleges and universities are challenging students to explore the relational nature of their own identities—as shaped by currents of power and privilege within an interconnected and unequal world and within a multicultural and unequal nation, region, city, or community.

While such learning can certainly occur abroad, it is too often simply assumed that an international experience is necessary to global learning, or that global learning automatically occurs in such contexts.

The Shared Futures initiative encourages colleges and universities to explore the potential of a global learning framework and the integrated curriculum it requires. Such a framework can give students the knowledge and skills they need to move from locally oriented questions of immediate personal relevance to global questions where the implications of personal and social responsibility may be less clear. Global learning, in other words, is not effected by simply translating or shifting the focus of an educational experience from home to elsewhere. Instead, global learning must help students understand the world in which they live and prepare them to engage urgent, interconnected, real-world problems—including questions of equitable access to resources like education.

**Global Learning at Michigan State University**
Michigan State University is aligning learning activities on campus and in the local community with its global competencies. For example, the Multi-Racial Unity Living Experience (http://mrule.msu.edu/) program is collaborating with the Center of Integrated Studies in Social Science (http://cis-ss.msu.edu/) to bolster global learning opportunities in two four-credit courses. In these courses, students spend one hour of classroom time each week attending a peer-led dialogue group. These groups discuss social issues from multiple perspectives and engage in activities in underresourced communities. The organizing theme of each course guides students to think critically and question social orders that are unjust and unsustainable.

**Social Differentiation and Inequality (ISS 215)**
This course uses the acronym **CHOICES**—representing categories of inquiry—as its organizing theme:

- Class/Caste Status
- Health and Human Rights
- Optional Ethnicities
- Immigration
- Civil Rights
- Education
- Sustainable Development

These categories serve as a template for making connections among different aspects of social reality in the United States and around the world. Implicit in the discussion of choices is the role of individual and group agency to promote social change and improve access to resources and quality of life.

**Global Diversity and Interdependence (ISS 315)**
Focusing on both global problems and their solutions, students in this course examine global diversity and interdependence through the lenses of socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental issues. Through a personal inventory, students place themselves in the world as they experience it, ask how they know what they know, and imagine ways to maximize their ability to engage in a social reality that is increasingly diverse and interconnected.

—JEANNE GAZEL and JIM LUCAS, Michigan State University

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Twenty-five years ago, I attended a meeting at which a Harvard demographer predicted the explosive growth of the Hispanic population in the United States. Now, in the twenty-first century, there are more than a million Mr. and Ms. Garcías in the United States, making it the eighth most popular name in America. Six out of ten of all American Hispanics were born right here in the United States, so as my husband often says when people start talking about the border wall, “It’s too late! We’re already here.” And for the next two decades, each month, fifty thousand American Hispanics will turn eighteen years old (Resurgent Republic 2012).

Will they grow up healthy or plagued by diabetes and heart disease? Will they be prepared academically to go to college or will they become high school dropouts? Will there be medical schools and graduate programs awaiting them with open doors, or will they continue to vie for just a few slots designated for students from minority-serving institutions?

In Texas’s Rio Grande Valley, home of The University of Texas at Brownsville (UT Brownsville), these questions are not theoretical. Our student population is 94 percent Hispanic and three-fourths first-generation college students. In the two decades since UT Brownsville was established, we have doubled the number of degree programs offered, doubled the number of faculty, doubled student enrollment, and tripled the number of degrees conferred annually. But as impressive as this is, the region’s population continues to outpace the university’s growth. By the year 2025, nearly one-quarter of the nation’s college-age population will be Latino. Excelencia in Education estimates that in order to meet President Obama’s graduation goals, five million more Latinos must earn college diplomas or certificates by 2020 than had earned them by 2010 (Excelencia in Education 2013).

Recognizing the importance of this defining moment for our nation, The University of Texas (UT) System has decided what it intends to do with all of these Latinos. We’re going to educate them. To that end, UT System leaders have made significant personal and financial commitments to plant a larger flag in South Texas and expand opportunities for students to earn a high-quality education. They have challenged UT Brownsville to take the lead in innovation to ensure that this happens.

So at UT Brownsville, we are reinventing ourselves. We know that our region cannot afford for us to spend the next two decades managing activities that will reap only incremental change for a few. Instead, we will answer the chancellor’s charge to create a new model of higher education for the twenty-first century. We have engaged national thought leaders to mine the very best practices in higher education, and we will move quickly to install those that make the most sense for us. We have also been studying our own most successful initiatives, dissecting them, and trying to understand what would make them scalable for thousands of students.

Imagine showing up on a college campus as a freshman and immediately being assigned four new best friends and a faculty mentor with whom you meet each week—a learning community cohort and a support system to keep you connected and on track towards your degree.

In fall 2012, we launched a unique bachelor’s degree in biomedicine with just these characteristics. The degree opens pathways to careers in medicine, research, biology and biomedical technology. It is designed to increase retention, accelerate time-to-graduation,
reduce costs to students, and increase the number of undergraduate Latino students prepared for graduate and medical education.

To welcome the first class into the biomedical program, I attended the special white coat ceremony traditionally reserved for medical students. The event took place in a large lecture hall filled with family members gathered to support their freshmen, who sat together in the front rows as if being initiated into a secret fraternity. Escorted onto the small stage one by one, they were received by the faculty, who placed a white lab coat on their shoulders—as though bestowing the mantle of knowledge itself, or at least the responsibility to seek the mantle of knowledge. Parents hovered close to the stage hugging each other and taking photographs to commemorate the moment.

After the students had returned to their seats, they stood to recite a pledge. To the more jaded academic, this might have appeared a bit corny, but I must admit that it appeared a bit magical, too. It was as if repeating the promise to study hard to prepare to be the next generation of scientists and physicians was in itself requisite to having it become true. When the students turned and faced the audience, I watched with great delight as even the most cynical faculty member stood a bit taller, a bit prouder for having accepted personal responsibility for ensuring that these students would individually and collectively succeed.

Next fall, the new biomedical degree will become part of the UT System’s Transformation In Medical Education (TIME) program. About one-third of the students who enter our biomedical degree program will be selected for the TIME Academy, an accelerated program that will enable them to complete the first three years of their undergraduate degree at UT Brownsville, UT Pan American, or UT El Paso and the last three years of the program at medical schools in the UT System—earning a medical degree in just six years.

Texas lags far behind the national average at 165 doctors for every one hundred thousand residents compared to the national average of 240 doctors for every one hundred thousand residents. In the twelve counties of the Rio Grande Valley, there are only 124 doctors for every one hundred thousand residents (University of Texas System 2013).

What would it mean to our communities if, instead of taking eight years to produce a physician, we could help students complete their medical degrees in six years—without compromising quality? What if, while increasing efficiency by improving retention, we were growing the number of Latino students prepared to succeed in medical school or graduate education and enter the health care systems of the twenty-first century? And what if, at the same time, our efforts significantly lowered student debt by increasing the probability of success and decreasing the time to degree?

Integrated Tutoring

Nationwide, learning communities have been shown to build community, raise the quality of learning, increase student retention, and accelerate time to graduation. However, they can be costly and difficult to scale up.

We have experimented with many types of learning communities, but none has demonstrated a more direct impact on course pass rates than integrated tutoring. Four years ago, with funding from a Title V federal grant, we implemented a pilot program with a simple design. When students sign up for one of several freshman-level classes with integrated tutoring, they agree to attend a non-credit peer-directed tutoring session linked to each course and scheduled either immediately before or after each class meeting.

So how has it worked? In each case, integrated tutoring has significantly improved the percentage of students
who pass the course. In English I, the pass rate improved from 52 to 69 percent; in algebra, from 55 to 70 percent; in history, from 47 to 73 percent; and in Chemistry II, from 55 to 86 percent. In addition, withdrawal rates from those courses were significantly lower in the experimental group (3 percent) than in a control group (10 percent). Finally, overall GPAs were slightly higher in the experimental group (2.42) than in the control group (2.38). One organic chemistry professor whose class participated in the model said that students with integrated tutoring achieved the highest test scores in the history of the course’s existence at UT Brownsville.

The integrated tutoring model worked with four hundred students. In fall 2013, we will experiment with scaling up this practice with the goal of offering all freshman-level classes in this enhanced manner.

**Student Employment Initiative**

Most UT Brownsville students must work to pay for their education, three-fourths of our students qualify for federal Pell grants, three-fourths are from the first generation in their families to attend college, and one-fifth attend part-time. These circumstances all increase the likelihood that students will take and complete less than a full course load every semester or “stop out” to handle life’s interruptions, decreasing their probability of graduating on time or at all.

To help students meet their financial needs and stay connected to campus, we developed another program that has shown impressive impact on student success: the Student Employment Initiative (SEI). The program, which serves about two hundred participants each year, requires students to enroll in at least fifteen semester credit hours per term and maintain a GPA of at least 2.75. Participating students gain placement in meaningful jobs that relate to their major, where they conduct research, intern, mentor underclassmen, and receive mentoring themselves.

Over the last three years, the 396 students in the pilot program have surpassed all expectations and program requirements. On average, SEI students completed 14.9 semester credit hours per term (99 percent of attempted hours), maintained a cumulative GPA of 3.2, and were retained at 98 percent. Eighty-three percent of participants have graduated in less than six years, and 43 percent completed their degrees in four years or less—graduation rates that are comparable to many more selective institutions in the UT System.

What if every student at UT Brownsville was able to achieve similar results while working on campus? We are currently exploring ways to make this possible.

**Sustaining our Democracy**

When I was a new president, the president of Miami–Dade College told me that the most important part of his job was to sustain the democracy of the United States. I told him I didn’t understand. He explained that his job was to educate the next generation of native Floridians, Cubans, or Haitians, and that if he did that well, his students would become vested in the American democracy and would nurture, defend, and sustain it. Decades later, I am still convinced that in that conversation, I discovered the most important nature of my own job as well.

There is nothing wrong with the human capital of the Rio Grande Valley that a bit of opportunity can’t solve. Students come to us having inherited their parents’ hopes of achieving the American Dream—that they might contribute not only to the well-being of their own families, but also to that of a nation revered for its history of opening doors. There is no greater allegiance than to a country that has offered you a leg up—not a handout, but an opportunity to study hard, work hard, contribute to the well-being of others, and succeed.

Working collaboratively across the entire educational ecosystem in the Rio Grande Valley, with support from local business leaders, national thought leaders, and philanthropic organizations, we are asking: Can we make more of a difference collectively? Can we gain momentum working in unison aimed in the same direction? Can we take successful programs scattered throughout our region and bring them to scale? And are we limited by just how revolutionary these models might be? How creative? How productive? How extraordinarily new?

We cannot afford to be remembered for those we excluded. Instead, we must be remembered for those we included, those who are working to make their generation the one that ends the vicious cycle of illiteracy and poverty. The fate of our children and of our country lies not in the past, but in its future—and the future is in our hands.

Angela K. McCauley contributed to the writing of this article.

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Increasing Transfer Student Diversity in the Absence of Affirmative Action

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In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate degree are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience. We will not fill those jobs—or keep those jobs on our shores—without the training offered by community colleges. (Obama 2009)

With his recent focus on the role of community colleges in vocational training, President Barack Obama is sending an important message to the nation’s potential students: go to college and develop job skills. But what are the implications of this message, particularly for students from low-income communities and communities of color who will be encouraged to pursue these vocational tracks? While the president’s focus on higher education and on community colleges in particular should be applauded, it should also be accompanied by a broader focus on completion of four-year degrees, with attention to transfer pathways from two-year to four-year colleges and universities.

Some of today’s best and brightest students begin their higher education careers in community colleges, and many could and should consider transferring to universities. But for this to happen, higher education officials need to ask what pathways are available to these students. The question is particularly pertinent for low-income students of color at a time when traditional levers for access such as affirmative action programs are becoming increasingly unavailable. Given current challenges, higher education must find new ways to ensure that a larger proportion of these students have the opportunity to pursue four-year degrees.

Challenges to Access

Increasing transfer rates for students of color is one of the biggest challenges that today’s higher education institutions face. Ensuring equal opportunity is of utmost importance, yet recent changes to law and policy have affected higher education’s ability to meet this goal.

In California, debate about access to higher education has raged for many years. In 1995, the Regents of the University of California instituted SP-1, barring race and gender as factors in admission decisions. While the regents rescinded SP-1 in 2001, Proposition 209—passed by the California electorate in 1996 to bar considerations of race, gender, and ethnicity in public employment and education—is still in effect. Both are clear examples of how serious and dangerous challenges to affirmative action can become (Chang and Kiang 2002). Bans on the use of race, gender, and ethnicity in college admissions had a devastating effect on the numbers of students of color who were admitted to selective research universities in California (Karabel 1999). For example, at the University of California–Los Angeles (UCLA), admissions for underrepresented students dropped by 53 percent between 1995 and 1998 (California Watch 2012).

On the national stage, legal challenges to affirmative action such as Gratz v. Bollinger in 2003 have limited the uses of affirmative action in undergraduate admissions. Now with Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin, argued in 2012 with a decision expected in 2013, the Supreme Court will once again decide whether and how affirmative action can be used in college admissions. If Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin results in a broad ban on affirmative action, institutions around the country may seek guidance from California and other states whose admissions practices have long been limited. Given the dramatic results in California, where admission rates for college-eligible underrepresented students have yet to recover to pre-1996 levels, it is clear that the elimination of affirmative action will continue to create inequities.

As a result of the challenges brought forth by Proposition 209, the California state legislature provided funding to ensure that the University of California would continue to develop programs that would maintain and increase diversity without the use of race, gender, and ethnicity. At UCLA, we used this funding to take a closer look at programs focusing on transfer students. The decision to focus on the transfer population was informed by the demographic profile of Los Angeles-area community colleges: within the nine community colleges of the Los Angeles Community College District, Latina/o, Asian American, and African American students comprise nearly 75 percent of enrolled students (California Community College Chancellor’s Office 2011). UCLA’s Center for Community College Partnerships was one outcome of this effort.

UCLA’s Center for Community College Partnerships

The Center for Community College Partnerships (CCCP) was founded in 2001 with the intent of enhancing and developing pathways from community colleges to UCLA and the University
of California system. Viewing transfer pathways as the combined and collaborative responsibility of two- and four-year colleges, CCCP focuses on strengthening partnerships between UCLA and local community colleges. With its commitment to social justice and diversity, CCCP works to increase transfer rates among underrepresented students by equipping them to view transfer as a legitimate and viable option.

CCCP’s philosophy is that immersing community college students in the four-year educational environment helps prepare them for university life. To create opportunities for such immersion, we have developed cohort models that allow students to share their experiences, network, and create a supportive community in college while honoring the communities from which they come. Rather than asking students to erase or negate their life experiences, we provide culturally relevant learning communities that allow students to explore and develop their strengths and become more academically and socially engaged. We work with students who have the potential to excel despite having been pushed out of the education pipeline, including those from low-income, first-generation, and immigrant communities.

CCCP’s programming is framed by critical race theory, which accounts for the role of race and racism in students’ educational experiences (Solórzano 1998). By affirming students’ sense that race is still salient even as higher education adopts race-blind policies, this approach helps students draw positively and productively on their lived experiences to authentically engage with their learning. Through critical race theory, we honor students’ intersectional identities—which include race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, immigration status, and others—as we help them build routes to a four-year degree. For example, many students of color come from communities with deeply underresourced schools, and peer mentors who come from similar backgrounds and communities can play a critical role in showing these students a path to success. CCCP thus empowers students to use shared stories as guides through the postsecondary pipeline.

**A Multi-Unit Approach**

CCCP initiatives are organized into four units: the Scholars Program; the Peer Mentoring program; summer programs; and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) initiatives. Each unit supports students prior to transfer, upon entry, and throughout enrollment at the university.

The Scholars Program is designed to motivate, inform, and prepare students to transfer to selective top-tier research institutions like UCLA. Scholars participate in a year-long academic program that begins with participation in the summer programs (described below) and continues during the academic year with peer mentoring and three Saturday Academies. The Saturday Academies provide opportunities for students to explore specific topics related to transfer, such as personal statements, financial literacy, internships, and general success strategies. The academies also keep CCCP participants connected to UCLA and its programs. Using a cohort model, the Scholars Program tracks participants’ progress throughout their enrollment at a community college.

The Peer Mentoring program links students currently enrolled at area community colleges to UCLA students who have successfully transferred from a community college. UCLA students serve as peer mentors at each of the area campuses, providing advice and guidance about the transfer experience and developing supportive relationships so community college students see firsthand the opportunities and challenges they will face when enrolling at UCLA or other universities.

CCCP summer programs provide students with an academic residential experience. The Summer Intensive Transfer Experience (SITE) program is a five- or six-day residential experience where faculty, admissions officers, counselors, and other staff teach...
students how to navigate the community college system and complete appropriate coursework so they can transfer to state universities. Building on the SITE program, SITE+ is a six-week non-residential program through which community college students prepare for the rigors of the university curriculum by enrolling in a UCLA summer session course for credit. Students receive scholarships that cover tuition and textbooks and participate in a supplementary program that includes peer learning, workshops, and exposure to academic research.

CCCP also participates in two STEM initiatives, the Jack Kent Cooke Scholars Program and the Santa Monica College (SMC)/UCLA Science Research Initiative. Both programs focus on increasing the number of students who major in STEM fields. The Cooke STEM Scholars Program connects students to UCLA prior to and during the admissions process through a summer academic residential program and several activities throughout the year, including STEM conferences and engagement with peer mentors. The SMC/UCLA Science Research Initiative identifies students interested in STEM and provides activities and workshops, peer mentors, and a summer program to connect them with other students enrolled in STEM fields.

All CCCP programs are designed to motivate students and introduce them to the university experience through exposure to a learning community and to the campus itself. The programs aim to help students develop a level of comfort that will minimize their “transfer shock” (Laanan 2001) and maximize their ability to adjust to a campus climate where their lived experiences may be discounted, particularly if they are students of color (Hurtado et al. 1998).

**Successful Program Impacts**

In its twelve years of existence, CCCP has established productive partnerships with community colleges throughout California, resulting in significant impact on transfer admissions. Admissions data from the Scholars Program and the SITE+ program highlight some of CCCP’s successes.

Of the more than three hundred students, the Scholars Program serves each year, over one hundred apply to UCLA annually, with 65 to 70 percent (the majority of whom self-identify as students of color) gaining admission. This compares favorably with UCLA’s regular transfer admissions rate, which ranges from 25 to 30 percent. Of students who are not admitted to UCLA but apply to another school in the University of California system, between 95 and 100 percent are admitted to at least one campus. Some students do not apply to any state universities but successfully transfer to other institutions.

The SITE+ program has also been a tremendous success. For the last five years, all participating students have received grades of C or better in their summer courses. In summer 2011, twenty-two students (sixteen Latina/o students, three African American students, two Asian American students, and one white student) enrolled in and completed the SITE+ program. Nineteen of these students received a grade of A or A+, and three received a B or B+. To date, eleven of the twenty-two students who participated in SITE+ have transferred to a University of California campus, and one has transferred to a private university.

**Conclusion**

CCCP at UCLA is making a difference in students’ lives on a daily basis. In collaboration with on-campus and off-campus partners, we couple high expectations with high levels of support, providing clear and positive pathways for students to succeed. We are driven to ensure that students from marginalized communities—who are typically encouraged to follow vocational paths as a result of the federal government’s stance on workforce development—have access to selective research universities and opportunities to enrich the university community. Our country’s success rests on their educational success. To learn more about CCCP, visit www.cccp.ucla.edu or contact us at aherrera@college.ucla.edu or dimpal.jain@csun.edu.

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CIVIC LEARNING FOR SHARED FUTURES

[PRÁCTICE AND PEDAGOGY]

Connect2Complete: Linking Student Success with Civic Engagement

SHANA BERGER, Connect2Complete project manager at Campus Compact

The higher education reform movement known as “the completion agenda” seeks to significantly increase the number of students graduating from college. This is certainly an important goal. Yet as many higher education professionals have pointed out, the completion agenda’s singular focus on “time to degree” may emphasize efficiency to the detriment of high-quality learning (Humphreys 2012). Aware of these critiques, community colleges are seeking innovative ways to increase graduation rates while also improving the quality of student learning. Campus Compact’s Connect2Complete (C2C) program aims to reach this goal by creating new, community-oriented models that support student success.

Campus Compact launched Connect2Complete in January 2012 with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. C2C aims to improve persistence by combining two strategies: peer advocacy and community-engaged learning. Together, these strategies encourage academic development, social integration, and personal development—all key factors in student persistence (see, for example, Cress et al. 2010; Crisp 2010). C2C applies these benefits to the challenges facing economically disadvantaged students, who persist and graduate at lower rates than their more affluent counterparts (Bailey, Jeong, and Cho 2009). The program seeks to reduce the barriers that cause economically disadvantaged developmental education students to struggle in college while empowering these students to participate fully as members of their various communities.

C2C Program Framework

During a two-year pilot, C2C institutions will engage underprepared, low-income students in high-quality community-engaged learning experiences and peer advocacy. With subgrants distributed by the national Campus Compact office, nine community colleges and their related state Campus Compact affiliates are participating in the C2C pilot. These include Broward College, Miami Dade College, and Tallahassee Community College (Florida Campus Compact); Cuyahoga Community College, Lorain County Community College, and Owens Community College (Ohio Campus Compact); and Big Bend Community College, Edmonds Community College, and Green River Community College (Washington Campus Compact).

C2C models at these institutions fall into two broad categories: course-based and cocurricular. In the course-based model, peer advocates (PAs) work alongside faculty in developmental education classes and support students during service-learning activities, as well as through social media and online platforms, office hours, campus events, and other contexts outside of class. For example, at Owens Community College, the C2C program coordinator pairs the PAs (called “civic ambassadors”) with math and English developmental education faculty to support student learning (see Christina Perry’s article on page 20). In the cocurricular model, student affairs staff coordinate with PAs who mentor small groups of developmental education students and facilitate community-engaged learning activities. Most pilot campuses have also created cocurricular service activities that bring together new and older cohorts of PAs and C2C students so that C2C students stay connected beyond their first semester in the program.

Peer Advocacy for Community Engaged Learning

Each C2C college is testing peer-to-peer advocacy models that reflect its particular campus culture. All campuses offer students either federal work-study funds, credited or non-credited leadership development training, or both. PAs support student success in two primary ways: by serving as mentors and by supporting community-engaged learning activities.

As mentors, PAs provide a variety of supports. They help students explore their multiple identities, life experiences, and self-concepts to develop a college-staying identity (Savitz-Romer and Bouffard 2012). They assist students in building relationships with peers, faculty, and advisors and in connecting with resources such as academic support centers, child care, public assistance benefits, financial aid, and homeless services. They support students in developing an understanding of and comfort with the unwritten rules of college and help them navigate the college experience (Crisp 2010).

As leaders of community-engaged learning, PAs receive training and work closely with developmental education faculty and community engagement staff. They introduce students to service-learning pedagogy, which promotes academic achievement, makes classroom learning relevant to the real world, and “has a positive effect on students’ sense of personal efficacy…and leadership and communication skills,” among other outcomes (Cress et al. 2010, 11). They also develop and maintain relationships with community or campus partners, facilitate reflection, and plan workshops.
that connect service and coursework to civic learning outcomes.

**Preliminary Lessons Learned**

Together with pilot sites and partner evaluators at Brandeis University, Campus Compact is collecting data on promising C2C practices. Early lessons have appeared in three primary areas: models for implementation, systems for supporting developmental education faculty, and ways of reimagining service learning to better meet the needs and draw on the assets of a vulnerable student population.

Early experiences suggest that course-based models have distinct advantages over cocurricular models. First, developmental education students with heavy work and family responsibilities may not have time for extracurricular activities, and course-based models reach them where they are—in the classroom. Second, service-learning pedagogy can make classroom learning more relevant to students’ lives—a key connection for students who may doubt the usefulness of a college education. Third, by recruiting students through course enrollment, the program can reach those who might not otherwise seek support, and are therefore the ones who need it most. Fourth, course-based models offer opportunities for C2C students to develop strong connections with faculty. Finally, an approach that focuses funding on faculty training and draws on work-study resources may offer a cost-effective way to reach a large number of students.

The pilot program also has demonstrated that professional development and community-building opportunities for faculty are critical to success. Campus Compact has thus created a national C2C Faculty Fellows Community of Practice comprised of two developmental education faculty members from each C2C campus. Through facilitated phone calls, an online forum, and face-to-face meetings, these faculty are sharing, solving problems, and creating practical tools for peer-assisted service learning and peer advocacy. Fellows are working with their colleagues to design and implement discipline-specific curriculum projects and to promote service learning and peer advocacy among other developmental education faculty on their campuses.

Finally, C2C has reminded pilot participants that the typical “in here”/“out there” map of campus–community partnerships does not apply for developmental education students. As Zlotkowski and colleagues write, “The

[STUDENT PERSPECTIVE]

**Building Bridges as a Civic Ambassador**

**CHRISTINA PERRY,** double major in international studies and world languages at Owens Community College

As a Connect2Complete civic ambassador, I help build bridges between classroom and community so students can connect what they are learning in college to their personal lives. Each semester, I work closely with students and faculty in developmental education courses to make these connections, which help students retain information while giving them a chance to better their community.

In the classroom, I support the instructor’s needs and help answer students’ questions. I try to make the classroom a stress-free environment and to empower students to make a difference, not only within themselves but also within their communities. I may also assist the instructor in selecting a community partner whose needs fit what students are learning in the classroom and coordinate service-learning trips with the community partner, freeing time for the instructor to focus on helping individual students.

This semester, I am working with a developmental education math instructor who requires students to participate in a group community service project with the Toledo Seagate Food Bank (which sources our campus food bank). In conjunction with the service project, students complete related math assignments and a reflection journal about their service-learning experiences. This partnership helps students become better community leaders and build confidence to obtain their goals.

Finally, my civic ambassador peers and I run the Owens Harvest Food Pantry and Community Garden. Every two weeks, I help pick up the campus food bank’s order from the Toledo Seagate Food Bank and work with civic ambassadors and volunteers (mostly pantry patrons who are students themselves) to stock the shelves.

Seeing how the Harvest Project affects student patrons makes every second of my time as a civic ambassador worthwhile. In order to obtain their goals, students need to be able to focus without being distracted by the simple need for food. Every little bit helps, and every day I am grateful to be a part of my fellow students’ success.
community college can itself be viewed as a community-based organization: It is of, not simply in, a particular place” (2004, 79). To find vulnerable populations and systemic inequality, one need only look around campus, where cuts to Pell grant funds coincide with the emergence of food banks to meet student needs (see Krista Kiessling’s article below). The C2C work thus challenges campuses not to abandon traditional community partnerships, but rather to expand our understanding of the community. Within the campus community, where student interests can be synonymous with community interests and students themselves can give voice to community needs, service activities can simultaneously address issues of inequity and meet student needs.

Conclusion
C2C project participants are engaged in cutting-edge practices to support college success. Their work translates the needs and interests of students, faculty, and local community members in innovative ways, transforming the meaning and value of community for each college campus.

Campus Compact is a national coalition of almost 1,200 college and university presidents—representing some six million students—who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education. For more information about Connect2Complete, contact Shana Berger at sberger@compact.org or visit http://www.compact.org/initiatives/connect2complete/.

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[PARTNER PERSPECTIVE]

The Harvest Project at Owens Community College

KRISTA KIESSLING, director of service learning at Owens Community College

The Owens Harvest Project (Helping All People Reap the Value of Education through Service and Working Together) has established a food pantry and community garden initiative to provide interdisciplinary service-learning opportunities that benefit students themselves. The project provides students an opportunity to explore the needs of campus community members while examining the broader causes of social problems.

Soon after Owens Community College opened its community garden in 2010, students began appearing after hours asking if they could harvest food. Realizing that these students were in need, the college decided to open a food pantry to serve them. The pantry now serves over five hundred people each month and distributes several hundred pounds of food weekly—all without drawing on institutional funds.

The Harvest Project offers integrated service-learning opportunities on campus while connecting with traditional off-campus community partners such as the Toledo Seagate Food Bank. Students in developmental education, marketing, urban agriculture, math, English, nursing, and dietetic courses have used the garden and pantry projects as service-learning opportunities and living–learning labs. These students apply the skills they learn in class and see the value of these skills in the broader community.

Connect2Complete’s civic ambassadors oversee the regular operations of the food pantry and community garden, developing strong leadership skills while gaining firsthand understanding of community service and civic engagement. Civic ambassadors share their experiences with developmental and college-level students, invite participation in the pantry and garden, and encourage faculty to develop service-learning projects relevant to course outcomes.

The civic ambassadors have helped bring viable academic potential to the Harvest Project, with profound effects on campus culture. The availability of on-site service opportunities has increased faculty interest in incorporating service learning into existing courses, allowing more students to experience its benefits. The project has also heightened awareness of the diverse needs of our student population while offering a means of addressing those needs.
Engaging Immigrant-Origin Students in Higher Education

ROBERT T. TERANISHI, associate professor of higher education at New York University
MARGARY D. MARTIN, postdoctoral researcher at New York University
CAROLA SUÁREZ-OROZCO, professor of education at the University of California–Los Angeles

Recent debates over federal immigration reform have highlighted higher education’s important role as a potential pathway to citizenship for undocumented residents. Yet immigrant populations in higher education are fundamentally misunderstood, mischaracterized, and understudied. There is simply insufficient research to inform a comprehensive understanding of the experiences and outcomes of immigrant students—including their demography, where and why they enroll in college, and the unique challenges they present for campuses, states, and higher education at large.

The Research on Immigrants in College (RIC) Project addresses the need for a more comprehensive analysis of immigrant students in higher education. The project is a mixed-method study of the relational and academic engagement of immigrant-origin students attending four public institutions in the New York metropolitan area (three two-year colleges and one four-year college). To date, RIC researchers have collected 905 surveys and conducted over one hundred interviews with a racially diverse sample of immigrant-origin students of various nativity and generational statuses. Researchers are triangulating these data with data collected through forty-nine interviews with faculty, administrators, and counselors, as well as through sixty classroom observations. The project also includes a national survey focused on undocumented students’ postsecondary experiences, outcomes, and trajectories, which involves collaborating with over three hundred student and community organizations that work with undocumented youth.

Comprehensive Understanding
Past research on immigrant college students has concentrated on the federal DREAM Act and the 1.1 million undocumented children it would affect. Yet another four million children who are themselves US citizens have undocumented parents, and an additional seven million students enrolled in public schools live in households with at least one foreign-born parent with legal status (Passel and Taylor 2010). It is thus necessary to think broadly and comprehensively about the immigrant student population when considering these students’ postsecondary trajectories and examining how practices and policies at the state, institutional, and programmatic levels affect their opportunities and outcomes. It is also necessary to examine immigrant students’ experiences in different institutional settings, including community colleges (Teranishi, Suárez-Orozco, and Suárez-Orozco 2011).

At the heart of the immigration dilemma lie the following realities:

- Now larger than ever, the immigrant population has been a fast-growing segment of US society and is projected to continue to grow quickly. The foreign-born population doubled in the past two decades to thirty-eight million residents in 2007 (Perez 2010). Children of immigrants are projected to represent as much as 30 percent of the public school population by 2015 (Turner-Johnson and Janosik 2008).
- The dreams of immigrant youth are frequently thwarted by barriers and discrimination that conflict with American ideals. As national higher education reforms call for a greater proportion of the population to earn a college degree, immigrants’ potential contributions are being overlooked.
- The immigrant population is diverse and geographically dispersed. Immigrants come to the United States from all over the world, leaving their countries of origin under different circumstances and arriving under a range of conditions with various assets and challenges.

In these contexts, higher education can play an important role in preparing immigrant-origin youth to become engaged citizens in a diverse democracy. But to accomplish this, educators will need to understand not only the backgrounds of this heterogeneous population, but also immigrant students’ experiences and outcomes related to civic engagement.

Engagement and Education Reform
Students are expected to become increasingly engaged in civic society during college, but research indicates that traditional measures of civic engagement typically do not consider the kinds of activities in which immigrants may participate, such as translating for community members and tutoring (Arnett Jensen and Flanagan 2008). Very little is known about immigrant civic engagement beyond traditional measures of political participation (e.g., voting and campaigning), which may exclude important segments of the immigrant population such as non-naturalized or unauthorized individuals (Waters 2008). Additionally, few studies account for differences among immigrant populations based on individual or background characteristics (Arnett Jensen and Flanagan 2008).

Findings from the RIC Project suggest that immigrant-origin community
college students are highly involved in their communities. Around three-quarters of participating first- or second-generation students (76.5 percent) and third-plus-generation students (74.8 percent) reported participating in one or more types of civic engagement. The kinds of civic activities in which they engaged varied significantly (Table 1).

The civic activity in which students most often participated was translation for people in their community. However, participation varied significantly by immigrant status and by race/ethnicity. Students from the third generation and beyond were significantly less likely to participate in translation activities (26.5 percent) than those from the first generation (48.6 percent) or second generation (43.1 percent). Among first- or second-generation immigrant-origin students, Latino/a participants (53.6 percent) were significantly more likely to provide translations for members of their community than their Asian (46.2 percent), white (34.3 percent), or black (28.2 percent) peers.

The percentage of students who reported volunteerism varied across generations and among immigrant-origin students of different racial/ethnic backgrounds. For example, over half of black immigrant-origin participants (55.6 percent) reported volunteerism in places of worship or community centers, compared to 43.6 percent of Latino, 40 percent of Asian, and 35 percent of white participants. Results related to mentoring also varied. First-generation students were significantly less likely to provide mentoring (38.6 percent) than second-generation (45.7 percent) and third-plus-generation (52.4 percent) students. Among immigrant-origin students, black immigrant participants (50.0 percent) were significantly more likely to mentor young people than white (40.9 percent), Latina/o (40.3 percent), and Asian (36.5 percent) respondents.

**Recommendations**

By gaining a better understanding of immigrant students’ civic engagement, higher education can improve its role in building on students’ existing commitments. Empirical studies that more accurately represent immigrant populations in higher education can also help colleges and universities recognize and appreciate these students’ relevance to institutional, state, and national goals and respond to their unique needs, challenges, and potential.

In responding to the data, colleges and universities can implement and expand on promising practices that can be found across the nation. One example is the Institute of Community and Civic Engagement at De Anza College, which aims to empower students—many of whom are from immigrant-origin backgrounds—to become agents of change in their communities and in local, state, and federal governments. Another promising initiative is the Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education, which encourages leaders in immigrant education to raise awareness about immigrant college students, to identify and share best practices, and to demonstrate how immigrant education contributes to the economic and social well-being of local communities, states, and the nation.

A number of programs are also assisting English language learners, a growing and increasingly important population.

As the RIC Project continues, we will release additional findings about these and other areas of research. For more information, visit icy.gseis.ucla.edu/projects.

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**TABLE 1. Civic Participation by Type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrant Generational Status — Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Child or Elderly Care</th>
<th>Advice or Advocacy for People in Community</th>
<th>Mentored Young People</th>
<th>Coached Young People (Sports)</th>
<th>Volunteered in Place of Worship, School, or Community</th>
<th>Engaged in Cause (e.g., Social or Environmental)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd+</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity among Immigrant-Origin Students (1st or 2nd Generation) — Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Child or Elderly Care</th>
<th>Advice or Advocacy for People in Community</th>
<th>Mentored Young People</th>
<th>Coached Young People (Sports)</th>
<th>Volunteered in Place of Worship, School, or Community</th>
<th>Engaged in Cause (e.g., Social or Environmental)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teaching democratic practices in an interconnected world can be challenging. Part of that challenge is giving students equitable access to educational environments where they can become more civically engaged and globally aware. General education reform and related changes to pedagogical and assessment practices are levers for ensuring that students have reasonably equitable educational experiences. But even when infusing global learning and civic engagement into the general education curriculum, institutions can face structural challenges to equity, including limited availability of the resources instructors need to incorporate new learning opportunities into their courses.

Because global learning and civic engagement efforts often hold issues of equity at their core, it is particularly important to provide students equitable access to these experiences.

Global Learning across the Curriculum
Unnatural Disaster Day grew out of attempts to infuse global learning into the general science curriculum. An interdisciplinary team began planning the day while attending AAC&U’s Shared Futures institute at Sonoma State University in 2007. In designing the event, the team aimed to support Chandler-Gilbert’s defined global learning outcomes, which state that students should acquire interdisciplinary knowledge of the world’s social, environmental, and economic problems; develop a heightened sense of global interconnections and interdependence; explore the historical legacies that have created the dynamics and tensions in the world; learn how to engage in deliberative dialogue about global issues, even when there might be a clash of views; and engage in actions to sustain and preserve communities and the environment for future generations.

To create each event, a cohort of instructors from different disciplines—including geology, biology, history, English, and economics—selects an environmental disaster to study across their respective general education courses. Each faculty member then devotes one or two weeks of class time to studying that disaster from the faculty member’s disciplinary perspective. Then, on Unnatural Disaster Day itself, all classes meet for a two-and-a-half hour event. At tables organized to seat one student from each discipline, students share their understanding of the disaster from their disciplinary perspectives.

On a piece of butcher paper at the center of the table, students note commonalities between disciplines. On another piece of paper, they categorize their knowledge as political, social, economic, or environmental. They then brainstorm to create an action plan for preventing or mitigating the effects of future similar disasters. After posting their action plans on the walls, students conduct a gallery walk. They discuss the commonalities and differences in their action plans and engage in a ten-minute written reflection about what they have learned.

Since its initiation in fall 2007, Unnatural Disaster Day has focused on a range of disasters, including contamination at the Love Canal site, environmental damage resulting from oil drilling in Ecuador (1964–92), the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the nuclear disaster at Fukushima, the depletion of the Ogallala aquifer, and climate change. The event calls attention to how a lack of human planning intensified these “natural” disasters and guides students to begin developing the knowledge that is essential to preparedness.
Embodying the Deweyan notion of learning by doing, Unnatural Disaster Day requires high levels of engagement and participation from students and creates an educational environment where “action is essential to gain knowledge and develop intelligence” (Shor 1992, 16).

**A Model of Participatory Democracy**

Although Unnatural Disaster Day was originally designed with global learning goals in mind, instructors soon noticed that the event is also a model of participatory democracy. Participants practice informed public dialogue as they form a more complete understanding of the disaster in question. Like citizens coming together with specialized knowledge to create public policy, students apply their different disciplinary perspectives to draft “action plans.” Each disaster selected for study shines light on the value of knowledge in creating public policy. Ultimately, the project aims to equip students to make better decisions about the future of the world.

In centering on an environmental problem, Unnatural Disaster Day provides ample opportunities for students across disciplines to participate in public dialogue. Take the open oil processing waste pits that Texaco left in Ecuador as an example. To prepare for discussion about this topic, geology students studied the formations of subterranean oil deposits and biology students studied the effect oil waste has on human health and the environment. History and English students addressed the humanistic aspects of the disaster, applying the lenses of imperialism and postcolonialism, examining the historical context and the consequences of nonrenewable energy use, and analyzing the rhetoric that Chevron (now the owner of Texaco) used to defend its practices. Thanks to the interdisciplinary design, each student at every table has something unique to share.

Buoyed by students’ enthusiasm, we have also created mechanisms for translating students’ new knowledge and engagement into concrete political action. At the conclusion of each Unnatural Disaster Day, most instructors ask students to write a letter to a national or local leader proposing their plan of action to address the issue in question. On occasion, we have invited a lobbyist from the Sierra Club to observe the conversations, review the action plans, and comment briefly at the end of the event on the day’s discussions and how they relate to the Sierra Club’s current work with the Arizona State Legislature. The event, then, not only offers global and civic learning to a broad cross-section of students, but also encourages participation in the political process—advancing political as well as social and economic equity.

Assessment has been an important component of the project. Evaluations of student essays, letters, and feedback have informed us of the critical importance of this event in creating a democratic education. To paraphrase John Dewey, the purpose of democratic education is to increase students’ abilities to make meaning from their experience and to act on it (1963). Unnatural Disaster Day is infused with this very purpose.

**Expanded Opportunities for Students**

At Chandler-Gilbert, Unnatural Disaster Day has provided a broad range of students with a democratic, globally attuned education. Last semester, we held three Unnatural Disaster Days, involving close to one hundred students in each event. We hope to expand those numbers by recruiting more faculty to devote a week or two of their curriculum to preparation for the event. These experiences of engaging in deliberative dialogue about public issues have the potential to benefit every student. Regardless of relative privilege, participants in Unnatural Disaster Day graduate from Chandler-Gilbert with an expanded awareness of global interconnectivity and interdependence and the capacity to better participate as members of the global community.

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[PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY]

Adjusting Micromessages to Improve Equity in STEM

CLAUDIA MORRELL, chief operating officer at the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
CAROLYN PARKER, assistant professor of STEM education at Johns Hopkins University School of Education

According to a recent report from Change the Equation, employer demand for skilled science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workers is at its highest in many years. Yet the United States is currently ranked twenty-seventh in the world for producing STEM college graduates, and US students’ interest and academic performance in STEM fields remain weak (Change the Equation 2012). To meet workforce needs, it is thus critical to engage and excite more students in STEM disciplines.

With racial and ethnic minority populations projected to expand substantially over the coming decades, recruiting more people from these traditionally underrepresented groups will be crucial to meeting the demand for qualified STEM workers (Center for Public Education 2012). Equally essential will be the increased involvement of women, who remain underrepresented in many STEM fields. Yet over the past decade, significant ground has been lost in women’s graduation rates in STEM programs at community colleges (Institute for Women’s Policy Research 2012). Four-year institutions have also made poor progress in increasing gender equity in STEM (DeAngelo et al. 2011).

Given the acute need to increase and diversify participation in the STEM professions, what can educators do to encourage historically underrepresented students to pursue STEM fields? This is among the questions the National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE) is asking as it works to ensure access, equity, and diversity in secondary and postsecondary education.

The Impact of Micromessages

In 2007, the National Science Foundation awarded the NAPE Education Foundation a grant to work with state and local educational agencies in twelve states to increase women’s participation in nontraditional fields. This grant funded the creation of a STEM Equity Pipeline program and led to the national implementation of the Program Improvement Process for Equity in STEM (PIPE-STEM), a “data-driven decision-making institutional change process focused on increasing the participation, completion, and transition of females and other underrepresented groups in STEM-related programs of study” (NAPE 2013). More than fifty secondary schools and community colleges have implemented the PIPE-STEM model, with resulting increases in female participation rates in STEM programs often exceeding ten percentage points.

Through PIPE-STEM, NAPE has identified a critical but insufficiently addressed phenomenon: the communication of unconscious beliefs or implicit biases that, despite educators’ best intentions, can discourage underrepresented students from pursuing STEM courses and careers. Many teachers and faculty are unaware that through conscious and unconscious words and actions, they are delivering micromessages along with course content. Bernice Sandler claimed that facial expressions, gestures, words, or tone of voice can convey perceived differences related to characteristics like gender, race, ethnicity, and economic status (1986). Accumulated over time, these micromessages can affect students’ self-concept or self-efficacy (Rowe 1990), critically influencing career choice (Bandura 1997).

Mary Rowe describes negative micromessages or microinequities as “apparently small events...frequently unrecognized by the perpetrator...that occur wherever people are perceived to be ‘different’” (1990, 2). For example, when a faculty member supervising laboratory experiments assigns the role of note-taker to female students, he or she may subtly imply that women are more capable as scribes than as scientists. Rowe demonstrated that microinequities, when accumulated over time, can damage individuals’ self-esteem and self-efficacy, and consequently their performance or decision making in the workplace or classroom.

In contrast, microaffirmations—the “tiny acts of opening doors to opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening”—provide opportunities to counteract microinequities and build self-esteem (Rowe 2008, 4). When consistently practiced, microaffirmations can lead to more confident students and a better classroom climate for all. A recent publication by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Why So Few? (2010), supports the importance of microaffirmations by highlighting research on the factors that influence women’s decisions to enter and remain in STEM courses, programs, and careers. The report calls attention to the need to create classroom and workplace environments that encourage the participation of women and girls.

Connecting the work of Sandler, Rowe, and AAUW, NAPE created the Culture Wheel model (Figure I) to advance an understanding of how culture, micromessages, student self-efficacy, and STEM course and
career behaviors interact. NAPE is now applying this understanding to improve classroom environments.

**FIGURE 1. NAPE Culture Wheel**

![Diagram of NAPE Culture Wheel with categories: Cultural Stereotypes, Behavior, Bias, Self-efficacy, Micromessages, Accumulation of (Dis)Advantage]

**Reach and Teach Every Student**

From 2009 to 2011, NAPE led a team of equity and STEM experts, researchers, and practitioners in creating a new professional development program, Micromessaging to Reach and Teach Every Student™. Developed using the lenses of gender, race, ethnicity, and culture, the program provides secondary and postsecondary educators with research-based strategies and effective resources to address each student’s unique needs. Gender equity training initially developed in Dallas, Texas, provided the program’s foundation, which has also integrated the PIPE-STEM model.

The year-long, interactive program focuses on the domains over which educators have control—the learning environment, curriculum, and instruction—as well as on instructors’ own behavior. Through seven units (thirty hours) of instruction, a professional learning community of peers, and access to STEM and equity experts, the program works to change unintended negative practices and create more supportive educational environments. Topics addressed include micromessages and their impact on student success, how to use microaffirmations to improve student outcomes, fixed versus growth mindset, attribution theory, stereotype threat, self-efficacy, multicultural awareness, intersectionality, equitable learning environments, and STEM career opportunities. As participants learn about these topics, they work to transform their classrooms.

Early data from the Dallas pilot suggest promising outcomes. In 2009 and 2010, both boys and girls taught by teachers receiving the training had higher pass rates on their Advanced Placement physics exams (3.8 times for girls and 2.6 times for boys) than students taught by teachers who did not receive the training.

With funding from the National Science Foundation, NAPE launched the Micromessaging program in 2012 with STEM faculty at the Community College of Baltimore County (Maryland). Participating faculty have implemented new strategies to change the classroom climate, including career awareness presentations, more authentic assessments, improved engagement and cohort building activities, and innovative uses of technology. Assessments conducted before and after the first semester of the program indicate improvements in individual participants’ student grades and awareness of STEM careers, as well as increased student retention and completion rates. NAPE is currently analyzing the program’s aggregate impact.

**Conclusion**

Changing classroom culture requires awareness of that culture and the myriad of micromessages that circulate within it. NAPE believes that with time, research-based knowledge, personal awareness, and strong support, teachers can address their implicit biases and develop communication strategies that encourage every student to succeed in STEM courses, programs, and careers. To learn more, visit http://www.napequity.org/professional-development/.

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Access to higher education remains essential for social mobility. Awareness of this reality has spurred public interest in increasing college graduation rates. And yet, lower-income youth continue to face seemingly insurmountable barriers on their pathways to higher education, from struggling public schools to rising higher education costs.

Strengthening the educational pipeline for these students will be critical as the proportion of traditionally underserved students grows along with the need for a highly skilled and educated workforce. But education is necessary for more than improving socioeconomic mobility and meeting workforce demands: it is also an important avenue toward the engaged citizenship an effective democracy needs.

Over recent decades, a movement to enhance the role of higher education institutions in engaging their communities has evolved and expanded. The movement has inspired some practitioners to ask: What kinds of programs can enhance students’ access to and success within higher education, while also encouraging and nurturing students’ civic engagement? How can such programs achieve impact at a sufficiently large scale?

The COIN Model

Launched in 2008 as a program of the New World Foundation, the Civic Opportunity Initiative Network (COIN) has been grappling with these questions through an approach that promotes civic participation while addressing the myriad academic and financial barriers to college access and success. COIN’s design rests on several distinct pillars, including access to higher education, mentoring relationships, a focus on community development, and a view of education as a commitment of citizenship (see sidebar). A network of community-based organizations, high school/college students, institutions of higher education, and private foundations provides support for these pillars.

Consulting firm Marga Incorporated assisted the New World Foundation in designing COIN and building its initial network, beginning with six community-based organizations drawn from the foundation’s grantee base. These organizations—selected through a competitive process and rooted in communities in California, Florida, New Mexico, New York, and Virginia—demonstrated a commitment to youth development in their localities and the capacity to provide guidance, tutoring, and essential support systems for interns. Each organization extended these supports to a cluster of high school juniors, collectively involving thirty-two student interns in the program’s initial cohort.

Through institutional and philanthropic funding, the original COIN scholars eventually gained tuition-free access to one of twenty-two participating colleges and universities. Now college sophomores, these scholars continue to participate in community-based internships and benefit from a number of services provided through the program, such as coaching and leadership development training. Ultimately, COIN aims to create a new cadre of local leaders with college degrees—active citizens committed to strengthening their communities of origin and other communities throughout the nation and globe.

Higher Education Connections

Part of COIN’s challenge is to recreate opportunities traditionally available primarily in schools serving higher income communities (including civic education activities, opportunities for social emotional learning, mentoring provided by committed adults, professional work experiences, and access to four-year colleges and universities). Achieving these ends requires the cooperation of various participants in the network, especially institutions of higher education.
COIN’s initial cohort of high school students entered undergraduate programs at colleges and universities spanning the spectrum of types of higher education institutions. Participating colleges and universities included institutions in the University of California system, Jackson State University, Penn State University, Manhattanville College, Mary Baldwin College, and George Mason University. These institutions have provided COIN scholars with different modes of support and enabled their participation in various dimensions of COIN programming.

Participants in the initial cohort have generally succeeded in their coursework and persisted in their undergraduate educations. Eighty-one percent of COIN scholars who entered the pilot program as high school juniors are still involved as college sophomores, and over 46 percent of these students have earned overall GPAs of 3.0 or above. Participating community-based organizations have increased their capacity and visibility through the program, strengthening youth outreach and developing longer-term outlooks on community engagement through COIN scholars’ involvement.

**An Expanding Scope**

COIN is currently increasing its scale by widening its network, initiating new summer service opportunities, and inspiring new programs that promote service as a way of leveling the academic playing field. More than 1,200 students beyond the original cohort have been served by COIN’s additional programming, just a few examples of which appear below.

New partnerships are one component driving the COIN model’s expansion. Under the advisement of the New World Foundation and drawing on lessons learned from COIN, the Posse Foundation has created Civic Engagement Posses, through which clusters of students at Bucknell University and Mount Holyoke College, as well as students connected to Posse’s Miami office, participate in social justice and civic training. Public Allies is building a pipeline for COIN scholars and others toward leadership in nonprofit organizations and community organizing. The Funders Collaborative on Youth Organizing has also adopted the COIN model, which it will implement in seventeen states as part of its Regenerations: Leadership Pipeline project to develop leadership among young people of color.

In addition to expanding its partnerships, COIN began piloting a Summer Service Corps in 2011, providing localized summer opportunities in collaboration with New York City’s Department of Youth and Community Development, Skidmore College, and the Roosevelt Institute. In just a few years, over one thousand students have participated in the summer program. Through summer service fellowships, low-income students earn stipends to participate in internships in New York City government agencies while receiving leadership and policy training from the Roosevelt Institute. Skidmore College helps select students to participate in the Summer Service Corps and provides ongoing mentorship and civic engagement opportunities.

Another project building on the COIN model is the Rutgers Future Scholars Program, which annually introduces two hundred rising eighth graders, mostly low-income students of color, to the promise of higher education. This five-year pre-college program provides intensive academic support, personal guidance, and mentoring. Currently serving over one thousand students in New Jersey’s major urban centers, the program is being expanded to institutions in other states. Like COIN, the program exposes young people to the transformative role of civic leadership in community development by providing training and immersion in the work of community-based organizations.

**A Compelling Framework**

COIN provides a compelling framework for simultaneously strengthening the education pipeline and promoting civic engagement. This multifaceted effort addresses numerous matters critical to the future of American democracy. COIN leverages higher education’s social and financial capital to enhance opportunities for historically disenfranchised young people, to build the capacity of community-based organizations, and to develop leadership potential to transform communities. Going forward, the New World Foundation is investigating new mechanisms that will enable COIN’s continued growth. To learn more, visit http://newwf.org/special-projects/civic-opportunities-initiative-network-coin.
Opportunities

Diversity Research Institute
The Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California–Los Angeles will host its 2013 Diversity Research Institute on July 23–24. Led by director Sylvia Hurtado, the institute “provides state-of-the-art research and practice frameworks to assess campus diversity and its impact on student outcomes.” Diversity affairs officers, student and academic affairs administrators, multicultural center directors and staff, and campus teams focused on undergraduate learning are invited to learn more at http://www.heri.ucla.edu/diversityInstitute.php.

National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education
The 2013 National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, from May 28 to June 1. Designed to serve a wide range of campus constituents, “the conference focuses on the complex task of creating and sustaining comprehensive institutional change designed to improve racial and ethnic relations on campus and to expand opportunities for educational access and success by culturally diverse, traditionally underrepresented populations.” To learn more about the conference, visit https://ncore.ou.edu/.

Expanding the Circle Summer Institute
The 2013 Expanding the Circle Summer Institute will take place June 24–27 in San Francisco, California. Designed to create an inclusive higher education environment for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) students and studies, the institute will convene faculty, administrators, and student affairs professionals to discuss and advance best practices. AAC&U is an institute partner. For more information or to register, visit http://www.ciis.edu/About_CIIS/Public_Programs/Expanding_the_Circle_.html.

Resources

AAC&U Podcasts on Diversity and Equity
AAC&U’s website provides free access to podcasts of plenary addresses recorded at selected events. Recent addresses focused on diversity and equity in higher education include Caryn McTighe Musil’s “Gender Equity: Who Needs It?” and Johnnella E. Butler’s “Two Steps Forward, One Step Backward. Must This Be the Future of Diversity?”—both delivered at AAC&U’s 2013 Annual Meeting. To download these and other recordings, visit http://www.aacu.org/Podcast/.

Civic Learning and Engagement
US Under Secretary of Education Martha Kanter and AAC&U President Carol Geary Schneider contributed the lead article to the January/February 2013 issue of Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning. Their article, “Civic Learning and Engagement,” argues that higher education must prepare students not only for the workplace, but also for citizenship in a diverse participatory democracy. The full article is available online at www.changemag.org.

Advancing to Completion—Hispanic and African American Students
In September 2012, the Education Trust released two Advancing to Completion reports focused on improving educational success for Hispanic and African American students, respectively. The reports highlight best practices from institutions that have demonstrated leadership in improving Hispanic and African American students’ graduation rates or reducing gaps between these students and their white peers. To download the free reports, visit www.edtrust.org.

Higher Education’s Role in Local Communities
Published in October 2012 by the Progressive Policy Institute, Democratic Devolution: How America’s Colleges and Universities Can Strengthen Their Communities urges the federal government to leverage its influence and encourage colleges and universities to act as positive forces in their local communities. Written by Ira Harkavy and Rita Axelroth Hodges of the University of Pennsylvania and featuring several examples of outstanding campus leadership, the policy paper is available at www.progressivepolicy.org.

Issue Briefs: Diversity Matters in Higher Education
With support from the GE Foundation, the American Council on Education is releasing a series of four issue briefs on topics pertinent to diversity and inclusion in higher education. The series begins with The Education Gap: Understanding African American and Hispanic Attainment Disparities in Higher Education, currently available for purchase at http://www.acenet.edu.

Engaged Learning Economies
This recent report from Campus Compact describes a new framework of “engaged learning economies” that can emerge when colleges and universities combine their work to advance civic engagement with their efforts to promote economic development. Coauthored by Amanda Wittman and Terah Crews, Engaged Learning Economies is available for free download at www.compact.org.
Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Calendar

The following calendar features events on civic learning sponsored by members of the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Action Network and others. For more information, please see the websites featured below, or visit AAC&U’s CLDE Calendar online at http://www.aacu.org/civic_learning/events.cfm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONTH</th>
<th>DATES</th>
<th>CLDE MEMBER EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>JUNE 2013</td>
<td>6–8</td>
<td>American Democracy Project (American Association of State Colleges and Universities) and The Democracy Commitment: A Community College Initiative National Meeting</td>
<td>Denver, Colorado</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aascu.org">www.aascu.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>20–22</td>
<td>NASPA Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement 2013 Conference: The Role of Student Affairs</td>
<td>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.naspa.org">www.naspa.org</a></td>
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<td>21–23</td>
<td>Interfaith Youth Core Chicago Interfaith Leadership Institute</td>
<td>Chicago, Illinois</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ifyc.org">www.ifyc.org</a></td>
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<td>25–27</td>
<td>Imagining America Summer Institute on Community Organizing</td>
<td>Los Angeles, California</td>
<td>imaginingamerica.org</td>
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<td>AUGUST</td>
<td>11–13</td>
<td>Interfaith Youth Core New York City Interfaith Leadership Institute</td>
<td>New York, New York</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ifyc.org">www.ifyc.org</a></td>
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<td>SEPTEMBER</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE) Annual Lynton Colloquium on the Scholarship of Engagement</td>
<td>Boston, Massachusetts</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nerche.org">www.nerche.org</a></td>
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<td>OCTOBER</td>
<td>3–5</td>
<td>AAC&amp;U Network Meeting: Global Learning in College: Asking Big Questions, Engaging Urgent Challenges</td>
<td>Providence, Rhode Island</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aacu.org">www.aacu.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>4–6</td>
<td>Imagining America 2013 National Conference</td>
<td>Syracuse, NY</td>
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AAC&U and the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Action Network

As part of its commitment to preparing all students for civic, ethical, and social responsibility in US and global contexts, and building on the momentum generated by the 2012 White House release of the report A Crucible Moment: College Learning and Democracy’s Future, AAC&U has formed the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) Action Network. Coordinated by Caryn McTighe Musil, AAC&U Senior Scholar and Director of Civic Learning and Democracy Initiatives, the network includes thirteen leading civic learning organizations that are committed to making civic inquiry and engagement expected rather than elective for all college students. Diversity & Democracy regularly features research and exemplary practices developed and advanced by these partner organizations and their members:

- American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- Anchor Institutions Task Force (AITF)
- Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)
- The Bonner Foundation
- Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP)
- Campus Compact
- Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE)
- The Democracy Commitment
- Imagining America
- The Interfaith Youth Core (IFYC)
- Kettering Foundation
- NASPA: Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- New England Resource Center for Higher Education (NERCHE)
Upcoming AAC&U Meetings

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<td>NETWORK FOR ACADEMIC RENEWAL</td>
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<td>Global Learning in College:</td>
<td>Providence, Rhode Island</td>
<td>OCTOBER 3–5, 2013</td>
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<td>Asking Big Questions, Engaging Urgent</td>
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<td>NETWORK FOR ACADEMIC RENEWAL</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
<td>OCTOBER 31–NOVEMBER 2, 2013</td>
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<td>Transforming STEM Education:</td>
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<td>Inquiry, Innovation, Inclusion, and Evidence</td>
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About Diversity & Democracy

Diversity & Democracy supports higher education faculty and leaders as they design and implement programs that advance civic learning and democratic engagement, global learning, and engagement with diversity to prepare students for socially responsible action in today's interdependent but unequal world. According to AAC&U's Statement on Liberal Learning, "By its nature…liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterize the social, natural, and intellectual world. To acknowledge such diversity in all its forms is both an intellectual commitment and a social responsibility, for nothing less will equip us to understand our world and to pursue fruitful lives." Diversity & Democracy features evidence, research, and exemplary practices to assist practitioners in creating learning opportunities that realize this vision.

About AAC&U

AAC&U is the leading national association concerned with the quality, vitality, and public standing of undergraduate liberal education. Its members are committed to extending the advantages of a liberal education to all students, regardless of academic specialization or intended career. Founded in 1915, AAC&U now comprises nearly 1,300 member institutions—including accredited public and private colleges, community colleges, and universities of every type and size. AAC&U functions as a catalyst and facilitator, forging links among presidents, administrators, and faculty members who are engaged in institutional and curricular planning. Information about AAC&U membership, programs, and publications can be found at www.aacu.org.

AAC&U Membership 2013

(1,293 members)

- MASTERS 31%
- BACCALAUREATE 25%
- ASSOCIATES 11%
- RES & DOC 17%
- OTHER* 16%

*Specialized schools, state systems and agencies, and international affiliates